

First confirmed report of *Thersamonia thersamon* ESP. (Lycaenidae) in Tuscany, Northern-Central Italy.

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This species is widespread, but local, in E. Europe. It has been noted from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and the Balkans, including Greece and Turkey. *Thersamonia thersamon* Esp. has also been found in Italy (Fig. 1) ; the species has been collected in Liguria, Emilia, Lombardy and various localities in the Abruzzo. Reports from NE. Italy need confirmation (HIGGINGS and RILEY, 1975 : 248).



Fig. 1. Northern Italy. Scale 1 : 6.500.000.

1 : Localities described by VERITY ;

2 : Localities described by C. PROLA, P. PROVERA, T. RACHELI, V. SBORDONI ;

3 : New locality described by the author : Vetulonia - Grosseto.

VERITY records the species from various localities of Pianura Padana, all south of the river Po ; other records from the North, such as in Trentino, need confirmation. VERITY also knew it from Central Italy : some specimens collected in the environment of Rome and in the Abruzzi are in his collection. From Southern Italy, except some specimens collected in Gargano (Puglia), the records need confirmation. From Tuscany also, there are notes on the collecting of *Thersamonia thersamon*, but no specimen can be found to confirm this. (R. VERITY, 1943 : 63).



Fig. 2. Plain of Grosseto under the Vetulonia hill.

Fresh research has confirmed the presence of this species in Central Italy, from Umbria, Lazio and Abruzzo (C. PROLA, P. PROVERA, T. RACHELI, V. SBORDONI, 1978 : 75).

In September 1982, I carried out some research in the fenland near the city of Grosseto (Tuscany) to verify the presence of *Lycaena dispar* HAW. At the end of this research no specimen had been seen, but one male and one female of *Thersamonia thersamon* were collected (Fig. 3-4).

The plain near to Grosseto is alluvial, deposited by the river Ombrone. The western part of the plain was a great fen which is now almost totally reclaimed. The area is widely cultivated, but remnants of the ancient vegetation are still to be found along the ditches crossing the plain (Fig. 2). Specimens of *Thersamonia thersamon* have been collected in May and September-October along the ditches in the NW. part of the plain of Grosseto, under the hills where there are the remains of the ancient Etruscan town of Vetulonia.

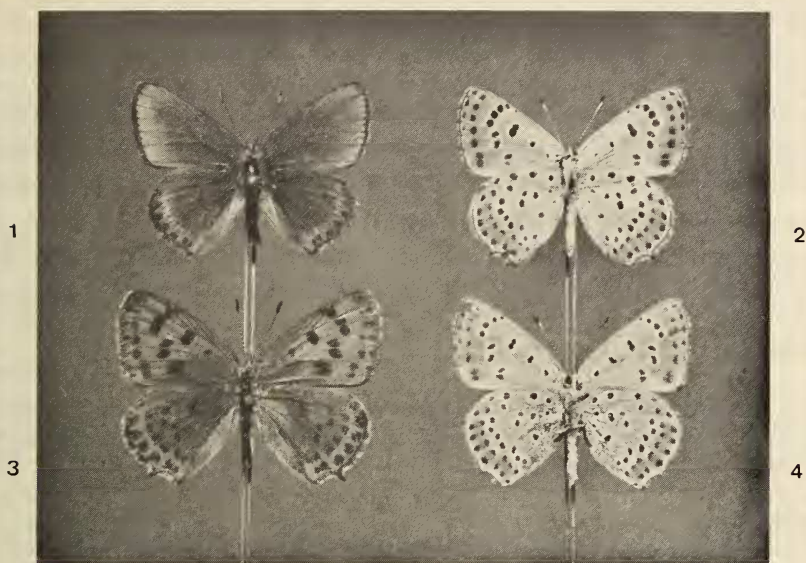


Fig. 3. Enlargement I : I,25.

1 : ♂, Vetulonia – Grosseto, m. 25, 21/5/83.

2 : ♂, Vetulonia – Grosseto, m. 25, 16/9/82.

3 : ♀, Vetulonia – Grosseto, m. 25, 16/9/82.

4 : ♂, Vetulonia – Grosseto, m. 25, 2/10/83.



Fig. 4. Enlargement I : I,30.

♂, Vetulonia – Grosseto, m. 25, 2/10/83.

The species always seems scarce and local, and many research expeditions fail to find it. The uncultivated lands where the larval food plants grow (*Sarothamnus scoparius*, *Rumex acetosa*) are limited by the intense agriculture of the plain, providing conditions which oppose the continued existence of this butterfly. The plain of Grosseto is the first locality of Tuscany where *Thersamonia thersamon* certainly exists and, at the same time, it is the most northern locality of the population of Central Italy.

All searches of the low plain of the river Arno have been negative. It is important to pay particular attention to this very local species and to carry out research all over Italy.

Résumé

Une nouvelle station peuplée de *Thersamonia thersamon* Esp. a été trouvée par l'auteur en Toscane. Cette population est géographiquement intermédiaire entre celles d'Italie du Nord et Centrale.

Références

- VERITY, R., 1943. Le farfalle diurne d'Italia, II. MARZOCCO, Firenze.
HIGGINS, L. G., N. D. RILEY, 1975. A field guide to the Butterflies of Britain and Europe. Collins, London, 3rd edition.
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